

THE ADVENT

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November, 1959

*A Quarterly Devoted to the Exposition of
Sri Aurobindo's Vision of the Future*

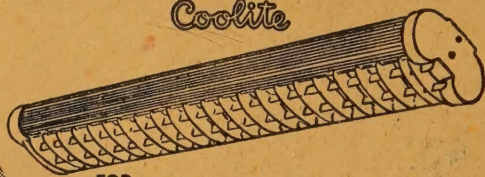


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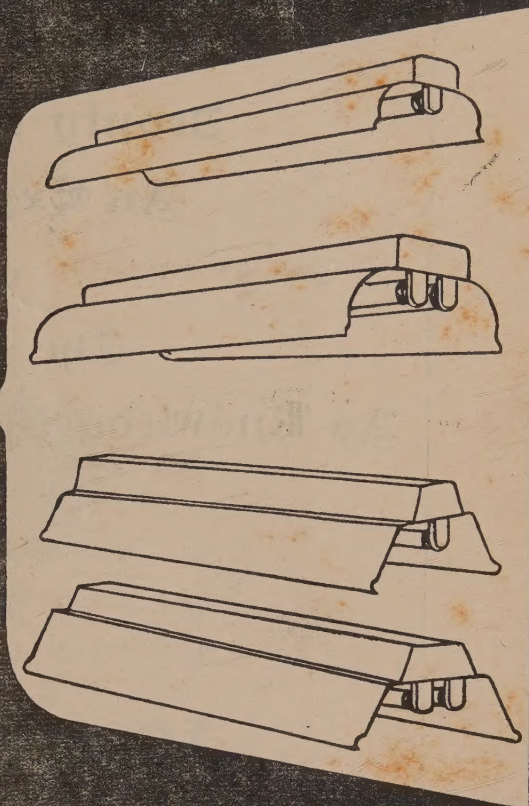
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The Advent

It is the Yogin who must stand behind the political
leader or manifest within him.

SRI AUROBINDO

The ADVENT

NOVEMBER, 1959

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When I say that the "Wise" should rule the world, it is not from a political but from a spiritual point of view.

The various forms of government can remain as they are; that has only a secondary importance. But whatever be the social status of the men who are in power, they should receive their inspiration from those who have realised the Truth and whose will is one with the Supreme's Will.

A stylized signature or flourish, consisting of a long horizontal line with a small dot above it and a curved line above that.



15. 9. 59

Quant je dis que les "sages" doivent gouverner le monde, je ne me place pas au point de vue politique, mais au point de vue spirituel.

Les diverses formes de gouvernements peuvent rester ce qu'elles sont; cela n'a qu'une importance secondaire. Mais quel que soit le statut social. Les hommes qui sont au pouvoir, ils doivent recevoir leur inspiration de ceux qui ont réalisé la Vérité et n'ont pas d'autre volonté que celle du Suprême.



THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - Sri Aurobindo.

EDITORIALS*

THE MOTHER'S COMMENTARY

ON

SRI AUROBINDO'S *Thoughts and Aphorisms*

VI

"Late, I learned that when reason died, then wisdom was born ; before that liberation, I had only knowledge".

ONCE again I must repeat it to you that the form of these aphorisms is purposely made paradoxical, in order to give a little shake to the mind, just to awaken it so that it may make an effort for understanding. You must not take it literally. Some people appear concerned at the idea that reason must disappear if one is to become wise. It is not that, it is not at all that.

Reason must no longer be the summit and the master.

* Mother's Weekly Talks to the Children of the Ashram

For a very long time, in life, before one possesses something that is like Knowledge, it is indispensable that Reason should be the master, otherwise you are a plaything of your impulses, fancies, emotional imaginations that are more or less unruly and you run the risk of going far away not only from wisdom but even from the knowledge necessary for good behaviour. But when you have succeeded in mastering the lower parts of your being with the help of reason, the summit of ordinary human consciousness, then, if you want to go beyond the point, if you want to be liberated from the ordinary life, ordinary thought, ordinary vision of things, you must, if I may say so, soar above the head of reason, not trample it under your feet with contempt, but make use of it as a footstool to climb higher, beyond it and arrive at something which cares little for its decrees and can afford to be unreasonable, because it is a higher unreason, with a higher light, something beyond the ordinary consciousness receiving inspirations from high, very high, from the divine Wisdom.

That is what it means.

As for the knowledge of which Sri Aurobindo speaks here, it is the ordinary knowledge, it is not the knowledge by identity ; it is what one can acquire by the intellect, by thought, by ordinary means.

But once again,—besides we shall have occasion to return to the subject in subsequent aphorisms,—do not be in a hurry to give up reason in the belief that you will immediately enter into wisdom; for, you must be ready before you can get into wisdom, otherwise, by abandoning reason you run the great risk of getting into unreason, which is rather dangerous.

Often in his writings, particularly in the *Synthesis of Yoga*, Sri Aurobindo puts us on our guard against the notion of some people who believe they can do yoga without a strict control over themselves and listen to all kinds of inspiration that lead to a dangerous unbalance in which all their suppressed, hidden, secret desires are given a free play under the plea that they are free from ordinary conventions and from the ordinary reason.

One can be free only by soaring to the heights, very high above human passions. You have the right to be free only when you possess a higher egoless freedom and when you have done with all desires and impulses.

Nor, however, should people who are very rational and very moral according to ordinary social laws, believe they are wise, because their wisdom is an illusion and carries no deep truth in it.

You must be above the laws in order to be able to break them, you must be above the conventions in order to be able to disregard them, you must be above all rules and regulations in order to be able to look down upon them and the purpose of this freedom must never be a selfish, personal thing, the satisfaction of an ambition or the aggrandisement of one's personality through a sense of superiority, through contempt of others in order to stand above the herd and look upon it with condescension. Beware whenever you feel in yourself this sense of superiority, and you look at others ironically, with a vain air, saying, "I am no longer of that stuff", then and there you are derailed and you run the risk of tumbling into the abyss.

When you truly gain entrance into wisdom, into the true wisdom, of which Sri Aurobindo speaks here, there is no longer anything higher or lower, there is only a play of forces in which everything has its place and importance, and if there is a hierarchy, it is a hierarchy of surrender to the Supreme, it is not a hierarchy of superiority in respect of what is below.

With the human understanding, the human reason, the human knowledge you cannot find this hierarchy; the awakened soul alone is able to recognise another awakened soul and then the sense of superiority disappears completely.

The true wisdom comes only when the ego disappears and the ego disappears only when you are ready to give yourself completely to the supreme Lord without any personal motive, without expecting any profit, you do it, because you cannot do otherwise.

VII

“What men call knowledge is the reasoned acceptance of false appearances. Wisdom looks behind the veil and sees. Reason fixes details and contrasts them. Reason divides, wisdom marries contrasts in a single harmony.”

All that Sri Aurobindo says about knowledge, reason, wisdom is meant to pull us out of the rut of ordinary thinking and, if possible, to give us a glimpse of the reality behind the appearances.

Generally speaking, apart from a few rare exceptions, men are satisfied with observing more or less correctly what happens around them and at times within themselves and classifying all these observations according to one system or another of a superficial logic, and it is these systems, this organisation that they call “knowledge”. They have not the idea even, not even the beginning of a perception, that all these things that they see and touch and feel and experience are false appearances and not the reality itself.

It is a general, constant argument, “But I see it, I touch it, I sense it, therefore it is true”. On the contrary one should say, “I see it, I touch it, I sense it, therefore it must be false”. We are at two opposite ends and there is no way of understanding.

For Sri Aurobindo true knowledge is precisely knowledge by identity and wisdom is the state attained when one has the true knowledge. He says it here : Wisdom sees behind the veil of appearances, it sees the reality that is behind. And Sri Aurobindo underlines that when you define a thing with this superficial external knowledge, it is always through opposition to another; it is always by making a contrast that you explain the things you see and feel and touch and then you do not understand.

Reason always opposes things against each other and compels you to make a choice. People having clear thought and reasoning see all the differences that are there between things. It is quite

remarkable that reason works only by differentiating. It is because you see the difference between this thing and that, between this act and that, between this object and the other that you take a decision and reason does its work.

Just so, the true knowledge, the knowledge by identity and the resulting wisdom see always the point where all things that seem contradictory are harmonised, completed, forming a whole perfectly coherent, coordinated. And that naturally changes wholly the point of view, the perception and the consequences in action.

The first step absolutely indispensable is not to repeat more or less mechanically and without knowing very well what one says, namely, "appearances are false"; we say it because Sri Aurobindo has told us so, but after all we do not understand, and in spite of everything, when we want to know anything we continue to look at it, to observe and touch and taste and smell, because we do not believe we have other means of observation. It is only when we have the experience of the reversal of consciousness, when we have gone behind these things and feel and sense in an absolutely concrete manner the illusoriness of these appearances, that we begin to understand. But unless you have had the experience, you might read all the aphorisms, repeat and learn them, and have trust, yet you do not have the perception, it is not a reality for you. And these appearances alone would remain the sole means of coming into contact with the outside world and finding out what it is. At times you have to pass a whole life in order to learn how things are in their appearance and you are considered a very cultured, intelligent person, full of knowledge if you have observed all that in detail and remember all you have observed or learnt.

One can, at the most, when one has worked much, have a little action on these appearances, change them just a little—that is how Science teaches you to handle matter—but it is not a true change, and it is not a true power. And so long as you are in that state, you are thoroughly convinced that you can do nothing whatsoever to change your character; you feel you are captured in a kind of fatality which weighs heavy, you do not know whence or how.

One is born like that, born in that place or in that surrounding, with that character, one has to go through life as best as one can, accommodating oneself to things upon which one has not much influence, endeavouring to attenuate the inconveniences of one's character without the power to transform it. You feel you are seized in a net, you are a slave of something which you do ignore, a plaything of circumstances and forces unknown to you, of a will to which you do not submit but which forces you. Even the most rebellious are slaves, for the only way to be free is to pass beyond the veil, see what is there beyond. When you have seen, then you can identify yourself and when you have identified yourself you have the key to the true transformation.

We read, we try to understand, we explain, we try to know, but one single minute of true experience teaches us more than millions of words and hundreds of explanations.

So the first question is : "How to have the experience ?"

Go within yourself, that is the first step.

And once you have succeeded in entering deep enough so as to feel the reality of what is within, you enlarge yourself, widen yourself progressively, systematically, to become as vast as the universe and lose the sense of limits.

These are the first two preparatory movements.

And these two things must be done in as complete a calm and peace and tranquillity as possible. This peace, this tranquillity in the mind produces silence, and in the vital, immobility.

This effort, this endeavour you must renew very regularly, persistently, and after a time, more or less long, you begin to perceive a reality different from that which you perceive in your ordinary external consciousness.

Naturally, through the effect of Grace, suddenly an inner rending of the veil may take place and one can enter at once into the true truth ; but even when that happens, if one is to get the full value and the full effect, one must keep oneself in a condition of inner receptivity, and for that, a day to day interiorisation is indispensable.

VIII

“Either do not give the name of knowledge to your beliefs only, and of error, ignorance or charlatanism to the beliefs of others ; or do not rail at the dogmas of the sects and their intolerance.”

The dogmas of the sects and the intolerance of religions come from this that sects and religions consider their beliefs alone to be knowledge and the beliefs of others to be error and ignorance or charlatanism.

It is because of this simple movement that they erect into a dogma what they think as true and condemn violently what others think as true. That is the meaning of the phrase. To think that one's own knowledge is the only true knowledge, one's own belief is the only true belief and that the belief of others is not true is to do precisely what all sects and religions do.

So if you do exactly as sects and religions do, then you have no right to mock at them. You are doing the same thing without noticing it, because that appears to you quite natural. And Sri Aurobindo precisely wants to make you understand that when you say, “We hold the truth and what is not that is an error” (although you might not dare to say the thing in that crude way), you do just the thing which all religions and sects do.

If you look at yourself in a little objective way, you will see that all that you have learnt or thought, all that gave you the impression of being particularly true and of capital importance has been erected by you as knowledge, spontaneously, without your noticing it and you are quite ready to contradict a different notion in others who say : “No, no, it is like this, it is not like that”.

If you look at yourself closely, you understand the mechanism of this intolerance and you can immediately stop all useless discussions. So we come back to what I told you already once : the contact that you have had with the truth of things, your

personal contact—a contact more or less clear, profound, vast, pure—might have given you, to you particularly an interesting and at times a decisive experience, but because this contact has given you an experience of decisive importance, you must not imagine that it is therefore a universal experience and the same contact will give the same experience to others. If you understand this, that it is purely a personal, individual, subjective matter, and it is not an absolute and general law, then you can no longer despise the knowledge of others or wish to impose your point of view and your experience upon them. That way you avoid all mental quarrels which are always altogether useless.

Evidently, the first phrase can be taken as an advice, but Sri Aurobindo did not write it in that sense ; it was to make you conscious of the error that you commit yourself and in others condemn.

It is a habit with people not only on this particular point but on all points. It is quite remarkable that when you have a weakness for example, a ridiculous thing, a defect or an imperfection that one has more or less naturally, you consider it very natural and it does not shock you, but as soon as the same weakness, the same imperfection, the same ridicule is found in another person, it appears to you quite shocking and you say, “how is it, he is like that !” but you do not notice that you are yourself “like that”. And then to the weakness and the imperfection you just add the ridiculousness of not perceiving it.

One lesson to draw from it : when something in another person appears to you quite inadmissible or ridiculous—“How is it ! he is like that, he behaves like that, he says things like that, he does that”—then tell yourself : “Yes, yes, but perhaps I do the same thing without perceiving it. I had better look within myself first before criticising another person, in order to be sure that I do not do the same thing exactly, with just a shade of difference”. And if you have the good sense and intelligence to do the thing each time you are shocked by the behaviour of another person, you will perceive that in life the relation with others

is as it were a mirror presented before us so that we may see easily and clairvoyantly the weakness we carry in ourself.

In a general, almost absolute way, the thing in others that shocks you is just the thing that you carry in yourself, more or less hidden, perhaps under an appearance a little different that permits you to have an illusion about yourself. It does not appear to you shocking while it is in you, but as soon as you see it in others it becomes monstrous.

Make the experiment, it will help you much, much, and at the same time it will bring to you in your relations with others, a smiling tolerance, the good will that comes from comprehension and that will very often put an end to quite useless quarrels.

You can live without disputing. It appears funny to say that, because things being as they are, it would seem on the contrary that life is made for dispute, in the sense that the chief occupation of people who are together is to quarrel, openly or secretly. You do not always come to words, nor to blows, fortunately, but within there is a state of constant irritation, because you do not meet around you the perfection that you would like yourself to realise—which you find rather difficult to realise—but you find it quite natural that others should realise it.

“How is it that they are like that ?”...People forget the difficulties that they find in themselves in order not to be “like that” !

Just try and you will see !

Look at everything with a benevolent smile, take as a kind of lesson for yourself things that irritate you, and you will live much more peacefully, and also much more effectively, for certainly a large percentage of energy is wasted in the irritation that one feels in not finding in others the perfection that one would like oneself to realise.

You stop at the perfection that others should realise, but you are not often conscious of the goal that you yourself should pursue. If you are conscious of it, well then, begin by doing the work given to you, that is to say what you have to do,

realise without busying yourself with what others do, because, after all, that does not concern you. And the best way of taking the true attitude is simply to say to yourself : "all who are around me, all the circumstances of my life, all the people who are near me are the mirror that the divine Consciousness presents to me to show me the progress that I should make. All that shocks me in others, is the work that I have to do in myself".

And perhaps if one carried in oneself a true perfection one would find it out more often in others.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

THE SECRET TRUTH

ALL begins from the Divine, from the Eternal, from the Infinite, all abides in it alone and by it alone, all ends or culminates in the divine Eternal and Infinite. This is the first postulate indispensable for our spiritual seeking—for on no other base can we found the highest knowledge and the highest life.

All time moves in the Eternal; all space is spread in the Infinite; all creatures and creations live by that in them which is Divine. This is patently true of an inner spiritual but also proves in the end to be true of this outer space and time. It is known to our inmost being that it lives because it is part of the Divine, but it is true also of the external and phenomenal creature compounded of ignorant Mind, blind life and subconscious Matter. A secret Self is the Alpha and Omega of this manifested existence; it is also the constant term, the omnipresent X into which all things resolve separately or together and which is their sum, their constituting material and their essence. All here is secretly the Divine, all is the Eternal, all is the Infinite.

But this secret truth of things is contradicted by the world's external appearances, it is denied by all the facts placed before us by our mind and senses, inconsistent with the sorrow and suffering of the world, incompatible with the imperfection of living beings and the unchangeable inconscience of things. What then pushes the mind to affirm it? What compels us to admit a seeing of things which is in conflict with our outer seeing and experience?

For on the surface of our consciousness and all around us there is only the temporal and transient, only confined and finite. What seems largest to us finds its limit, what we assumed to be as enduring comes to an end; even this vast universe with its

masses of worlds upon worlds which seemed to stretch into infinity is convicted in the end of being only a boundless finite. Man claiming to be a divine soul and an all-discovering intellect is brought up short by Nature's rude proof of his ignorance and incompetence and exhibits constantly in his thoughts the proneness to self-confident error and faultiness, in his feelings and acts the pettiness, meanness and darkness or suddenly the abysses of falsehood or foulness or cruelty of his nature. In the management of this world the much that is undivine prevails easily over the little that is divine or they are inextricably mixed together. The ideal fails in practice, religion degenerates quickly into a militant sectarianism, fanaticism or formality, the triumphant good turns into an organised evil. The Christian doctrine of the fall, the Indian idea of the wandering of the Soul into a cosmic illusion or the sceptic affirmation of an inconscient material Nature producing the freak of consciousness seems often to be the kernel of the whole matter.

.....

SRI AUROBINDO

SRI AUROBINDO LITERATURE (IV)

The Superman

FOR a sadhaka of the supramental Yoga, as indeed of all Yoga, it is indispensable to have beforehand a right understanding of the nature of the Goal of the path he is to tread. He should know, as precisely as possible, the full content of the Ideal, its implications immediate and eventual, so that no effort is misdirected or wasted, no turn taken that would defeat the very purpose of the Journey.

The aim of this Yoga is to exceed the boundaries of the imperfect mind in man and to enliven in him a principle which is free from the limitations of mind, a faculty which is above the mind,—the supermind. Man is to grow into a superman.

Now what exactly is meant by superman ?

It goes without saying that a superman is not, as is commonly conceived or misconceived, simply a glorified edition of the ordinary man. A man whose powers and capacities are raised to an uncommon degree, towering high above his less fortunate fellow beings, dominating them by virtue of his superior might—this is the figure of the superman popularised by vitalist thinkers like Nietzsche. Such a man, it will be noted, remains still a man. Only his faculties have an enlarged sway; they continue to be centred round his ego which is now much more exaggerated. He is a veritable titan, Asura, whose role in the cosmic evolution is happily past. The superman of our conception is one who has cultivated and perfected in their fullest amplitude and height the essential powers of his being on all its ranges of body, life, mind and soul but at the same time has purged himself of all the deformations of ego and ignorance and passed into godhood. He is risen above the reign of nature and enthroned himself in

the freedom of the soul from where he governs her activities. He is the master of his own being, *svarāt*.

He too governs the lives of others but in another sense. He is one with them in the secrecies of their being, feels their heart-beats as his own and pours his energies for their advancement. Freed from the bonds of the separative ego, he expands in his consciousness gathering into its fold the wide universe around. He holds all in his clasp, not of power, but of love. He receives in his illumined being the movements of those around and returns them uplifted and charged with his transmuting vibrations which exert an incessant pressure on his environs moulding them in the likeness of the Truth of his living. He is the world-ruler, *samrāt*.

He is no more subject to the law of Division which is characteristic of the rule of mind. In him the several principles of Existence e.g., Knowledge, Love, Power, Unity, do not clash and seek to suppress each other in their drive for exclusive expression as they do in the mind-governed domain of man. They develop, each into its fullness, and find their completion in the fulfilment of all. All see each other as the common petals of a budding rose. The many notes struck by them fall into a rich harmony and he reproduces in himself the rhythms of the cosmic harp in the hands of God.

This and no other is the significance of the superman. To this end must man work with a singleness of purpose, exercising his will enlightened by the growing light of the soul at every step, to eliminate all that belongs to the lower order of life and to choose what leads to the higher, however difficult and arduous the course may be. But is he free to choose? Is man not, more truly, a leaf driven hither and thither by the gusts of universal forces? Is he not just a creature under the goad of Karma, Fate, forged by himself and by others?

II

There is, says Sri Aurobindo, a truth in Fate, in determinism. There is also, he adds, a truth in Free-will. Both are two movements of one Cosmic Energy put out by the Divine Shakti at work. The universe is an expression of a Will and all in it follows the lines of that Will for the execution of its Purpose. In this sense all is determined. But the Will works through a hundred currents of its own formulation as Power, Energy that is many-tiered. In the individual it works most effectively through his sense of freedom, freedom to choose and act. This freedom of the individual is a device of the All-Will to effectuate itself. The will of the individual is a segment of the Universal Will and what it works out is ultimately just what is assigned to it in the larger Plan of the One Will.

And yet, within certain limits the individual is free to choose. Even the compulsive factors in Nature, Heredity and Environment which Modern Science emphasises to underline the rigid law of causation governing this material world, are only elements that are provided by an All-seeing Intelligence to the free choice of the soul at every graded step of its evolutionary career. Once chosen these factors come into their own operation, call it by whatever name. But it is the soul that chooses initially; it is again the soul that chooses its own destiny in future by means of the Karma it puts out at every moment consciously.

The individual will is a part of the Universal Will and the secret of progress lies in the discovery of harmony between the two. As long as one chooses to act by his own ego-will regardless of the demands of the greater Will there is friction, struggle and even catastrophe. But as one learns to identify oneself and make himself Its instrument the friction dissolves and a harmonious working is ensured. To awaken to this role of the instrument is then the first necessity.

III

To the seeker of the truth of this Manifestation of the Divine, all work is work for the Divine and by the Divine. He perceives that for each work there is the Master of the Work, the Worker and the Instrument. He knows himself to be neither the Master nor the Worker. He is only the instrument. He equips himself as a ready and willing instrument whose sole aim is to serve as a perfect channel for the divine execution and whose whole joy is in the privilege of being so chosen. He learns to feel the inmost law of his nature, sets all the members of his being in tune with this demand of the soul and grows into a joyous conscious instrument of the real Worker who is none other than Nature.

Nature that is All-Nature and of which his own nature is a special movement. Hers is the one Force that works and effectuates simultaneously in the individual and in the universe. The sadhaka awakens to this fact of One Nature within and without and gradually identifies himself with the infinite Force of All-Nature. As his consciousness widens and deepens in this Knowledge, he becomes aware that it is not for herself that all work is done by Nature but for One who is her Lord.

He discovers the poise of the Lord on the heights of his being even as he came to recognise the dynamis of the Executrix-Nature in his own. It is only when one will have known and begun to live this triple truth of the Instrument, the Worker and the Master in his own being that he shall have the full joy of work, his share in the Lila of Manifestation.

M. P. PANDIT

THE DUAL BEING*

THE "Last Poems" of Sri Aurobindo are the classic and mature expressions of the major realisations in the practice of Integral Yoga. Words here are "allowed to roll out into an illimitable wave of suggestion, breaking the hard limiting definiteness of intellectual utterance" but at the same time avoiding the haze of the luxuriant imagination which hides more in an iridescent blaze than reveals what it seeks to communicate. We have in these poems a spiritual concreteness and precision and the quality of style is best characterised by the terms *ojas* and *prasanna gambhīrya*. The aim of the poet is not so much to convey the reaction of the surface being—the mental and emotional apparatus—to the subliminal and superconscious depths and heights but to describe with the utmost accuracy of detail and impersonality these untrodden regions of consciousness. In fact, the centre of gravity of the personality is shifted to those very heights and depths and these have become the native air and the natural habitation. The Shanti of these zones has invaded the mind and heart and they have become one solid block of peace losing their normal tremor or trepidation at the unusual or the extraordinary but responding with alertness and sharing the glory of these regions as their natural birthright. This is a new kind of aesthesis, the poetry not of emotion or thought but of calm Vision, not even the emotional reaction to Vision but Vision of Vision. Perhaps the only parallel in world literature is the ancient Upanishadic utterance which was composed to take the sincere sadhaka to the very sanctuary of the Brahman by *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*.

* Poem of Sri Aurobindo included in his *Last Poems*.

II

Yogic Sadhana has its beginning when man who is normally entrenched in his externalising consciousness gets discontented with its stress of transitory satisfactions and turns his gaze within to something deeper or higher and immortal in him—*āvṛttacakṣuḥ amṛtatvam icchan*. Then he no longer considers the present organisation of his consciousness as the limit of his possibilities or the sensible world the only field of experience—*nāyam loko asti na para iti māni*. Very often this is the natural result of and the response to the intimations of Immortality from within on the surface, the Grace of the Divine Antaryamin. 'He who chooses the Infinite has been chosen by the Infinite.' The behind and the beyond become so all-absorbing that they seem to be the sole reality and the surface life thoroughly unreal, only to be dissolved in death when the original momentum exhausts itself. An exclusive preoccupation with and concentration upon this state may lead to the experience of the Advaitic Laya or Nirvana. But another, inclusive realisation is quite possible when one feels the simultaneous reality of the Surface and the Depths. The ordinary life stresses upon the reality of the surface while negating the Depths; the ascetic life emphasises the Depths and negates the surface. The basic foundation and initial major realisation of Integral Yoga is the sustained experience of the Truth of both and the need of each other for their combined fulfilment. The Kshara and the Akshara are the field and instruments for the play of the Purushottama. Sri Aurobindo's sonnet on The Dual Being embodies this fundamental experience of Purna Yoga.

III

The poem begins with a stark and categorical enunciation of the reality of the two beings in man's estate :

"There are two beings in my single" self and goes on to describe and crystallise their nature and relationship.

THE DUAL BEING

A Godhead watches Nature from behind
At play in front with a brilliant surface elf,
A time-born creature with a human mind.

The Inner Being is an immortal and eternal Purusha who sees the play on the surface. The outer being is the Ego or the smaller self involved in the game of life in Nature. It is indeed an elf, a dwarf, a tricky, froward, or fairy-like being. For every challenge from Cosmic Nature with her large and wide movements, it gives its characteristically narrow and stunted response based on separative consciousness. Endless are its locutions and subterfuges and extraordinarily swift and elusive and fairy-like its movements with the faculties of man and Nature. Its marvellous capacity for deception and self-deception and ingenious ways of offence, defence and self-defence make it brilliant. It is a time-born creature because it is the product in the evolutionary movement of the formation of conscious personality, born in time and subject to time for it has to come to an end the moment the full-blown and true Purusha is manifested. Its instrument is the limited and very human mind. This spectacle of the Great Prakriti at play with the elusive little ego is naturally interesting and the inner Purusha enjoys it while witnessing it. But the word 'watches' indicates that He is not a mere passive witness indifferent to the whole scheme. He is interested in the play and seems to be waiting for the moment and the right conditions when He can intervene and fulfil his purpose of entry into Time.

For He is the Inner Sovereign, not mere *sākṣī* or *anumantā* but *prabhu* and *vibhu*.

Tranquil and boundless like a sea or sky,
The Godhead knows himself Eternity's son.
Radiant his mind and vast, his heart as free;
His will is a sceptre of dominion.

A vast and unlimited consciousness is his very nature and any movement in it does not disturb its equilibrium but a mighty

imperturbable positive Peace accompanies and interpenetrates even the dynamism. He is the delegate of the Transcendent Purushottama beyond Time, the child of the Mother of Infinite Consciousness, Aditi and the Knowledge of his true nature is self-existent. His instruments partake of his divinity—a mind full of the light of Truth and wide enough to extend and know by identity whatever should be known, a heart with the same freedom of unlimited expansion and power of love and a will with an absolute and almighty power of rule and execution and government of the empire of Nature. He is the King of kings destined to rule with Knowledge, Love and Power the kingdom of Prakriti. He is the luminous and fully-Conscious Personality and therefore the divine counterpart and fulfilment of the Ego whose nature and movements form a complete contrast to His swabhava.

The smaller self by Nature's passions driven,
Thoughtful and erring learns his human task;
All must be known and to that Greatness given
This mind and life, the mirror and the mask.

The Ego is a slave of Nature and is helplessly subject to the modes and moods of Nature—its mode of poise or balance or comparative light, or restless dynamism without any settled issue or result, or ignorant somnambulance or sleep,—Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. Its attempt at increased awareness of life in Nature is indeed a hard labour fraught with many errors and doubtful cogitations. Its work is an obscure groping towards understanding, not a quick and easy grasp. It is a child learning with difficulty its lessons—thoughtful and erring. But this work of becoming increasingly conscious and aware of Prakriti is a work that has to be done and there is no escape from it; but a secret compulsion from within sets the ego on this dolorous way after every apparent failure. 'All must be known'. For the Ego is an obscure delegate and vassal of the Inner Sovereign. Without the work of the Ego, Nature would remain an unorganised, inchoate mass of

consciousness. The Ego is therefore the helper in evolution so long as it wins from Universal Nature small bits of organised territory to its sovereign Godhead. It becomes a bar only when it arrogates to itself what should rightly be offered to the Divine Guest within. To become fully conscious of mind and life and to offer them free and whole to His Will is its duty. For He has the secret of transformation of mind and life. The mind is "the mediator between the Superconscient and the Inconscient"—a mirror to reflect life faithfully to the Higher Consciousness and the light of the Upper Hemisphere to the triple world of Ignorance. And life itself is only a mask for it contains within itself the very Sachchidananda it seems to be the negation of, therefore making the whole of the scheme of Cosmic evolution a Lila of the Divine Antaryamin and Sutradhara.

As with the figure of a symbol dance
The screened Omniscient plays at Ignorance.

As Sri Aurobindo explains in "Thoughts and Glimpses" :—

Man seeks at first blindly and does not even know that he is seeking his divine self; for he starts from the obscurity of material Nature and even when he begins to see, he is long blinded by the light that is increasing in him. God too answers obscurely to his search : He seeks and enjoys man's blindness like the hands of a little child that grope after its mother.

God and Nature are like a boy and girl at play and in love. They hide and run from each other when glimpsed so that they may be sought after and chased and captured.

Man is God hiding himself from Nature so that he may possess her by struggle, insistence, violence and surprise.

God is universal and transcendent Man hiding himself from his own individuality in the human being

Or, in the epic lines of 'Savitri':

All here where each thing seems its lonely self
Are figures of the sole transcendent One :

Only by him they are, his breath is their life;
 An unseen Presence moulds the oblivious clay.
 A playmate in the mighty Mother's game,
 One came upon the dubious whirling globe
 To hide from her pursuit in force and form.
 A secret spirit in the Inconscient's sleep,
 A shapeless Energy, a voiceless Word,
 He was here before the elements could emerge,
 Before there was light of mind or life could breathe.
 Accomplice of her cosmic huge pretence,
 His semblance he turns to real shapes
 And makes the symbol equal with the truth :
 He gives to his timeless thoughts a form in Time.

IV

We have in the first section of the third chapter of the Mundaka Upanishad the record of a very similar realisation and no wonder, because the Yoga of the Upanishads is based on a large and comprehensive affirmation of the simultaneous reality and purposive relationship of the Timeless and Time.

"Two birds, beautiful of wing, close companions, cling to one common tree; but of the two one eats the sweet fruit of the tree, the other eats not but watches his fellow.

The soul is the bird that sits immersed on the one common tree; but because he is not lord he is bewildered and has sorrow. But when he sees that other who is the lord and beloved, he knows, that all is His greatness and his sorrow passes away from him.

When, a seer, he sees the Golden-hued, the maker, the Lord, the Spirit who is the source of Brahman, then he becomes the knower and shakes from his wings sin and virtue; pure of all stain he reaches the supreme identity.

This is the life in things that shines manifested by all these beings; a man of knowledge coming wholly to know this, draws back from creeds and too much wrangling. In the Self his delight,

at play in the Self, doing works,—the best is he among the knowers of the Eternal.

The Self can always be won by truth, by self-discipline, by integral knowledge, by a life of purity,—this Self that is in the inner body, radiant, made all of light whom, by the perishing of their blemishes the doers of askesis behold.

It is Truth that conquers and not falsehood; by Truth was stretched out the path of the journey of the gods, by which the sages winning their desire ascend there where Truth has its Supreme abode.

Vast is That, divine, its form unthinkable; it shines out subtler than the subtle : very far and farther than farness, it is here close to us, for those who have vision it is even here in this world; it is here hidden in the secret heart.”

and in the second section of Chapter Two :

“A mental being, leader of the life and the body, has set a heart in matter, in matter he has taken his firm foundation. By its knowing the wise see everywhere around them That which shines in its effulgence, a shape of Bliss and immortal.

The knot of the heart strings is rent, cut away are all doubts, and a man’s works are spent and perish, when is seen That which is at once the being below and the Supreme.

In a supreme golden sheath the Brahman lies, stainless, without parts. A Splendour is That, It is the Light of Lights, It is That which the self-knowers know.

There the sun shines not and the moon has no splendour and the stars are blind; there these lightnings flash not, how then shall burn this earthly fire ? All that shines is but the shadow of his shining; all this universe is effulgent with his light.

All this is Brahman immortal, naught else; Brahman is in front of us, Brahman behind us, and to the south of us and to the north of us and below us and above us; it stretches everywhere. All this is Brahman alone, all this magnificent universe.”

(Sri Aurobindo’s translations in *Eight Upanishads*.)

The study of each poem is enriched by a comparison with the other and the similarities in content, style and images are very close. Perhaps the only difference is in the greater stress in Sri Aurobindo's sonnet on the Samarpana (surrender) as a prelude to Transformation, for this poem naturally points to another sonnet—The Inner Sovereign—though the Upanishad does not negate its possibility.

V

The form of the sonnet where there is 'a progression like the pressing of waves to the shore, with the finality of arrival swift to a closing couplet' is eminently suited to the crystallisation of a stage in Sadhana. It is 'a moment's monument'. Its complex rhyme scheme echoing the sound backwards and forwards leading to a final stabilised state is the outward embodiment of the visionary state of the poet first dwelling on the different aspects of the realisation sought to be communicated and reaching a satisfied culmination at the end in the clinching close. The utility of this short meditation to the sadhaka is immense. 'Poetry is the sensuality of the Spirit' and to soak oneself in this "sensuality" is to make oneself ready to receive His Grace. To drop a syllable of this supreme utterance into one's pure and receptive consciousness and watch its reverberations and finally to surrender oneself to the Consciousness behind the utterance, so revealed, are an easy canter to the goal of the path. This process of Rajayogic Samyama—Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi—blended with the Devotion and reliance on the Yogashakti of the Guru will give him initially a glimpse of the realisation which would be followed by a period of preparation by life and tapasya and purification only to end in sustained identity with the state described in the poem. This is the whole secret of Parayana, Adhyayana and Anusandhana. The Upanishad of the Integral Yoga has been given by the Yogeswara and what remains to be done is to follow the injunction of the Seer of the Mundaka :-

“Take up the bow of the Upanishad, that mighty weapon, set to it an arrow sharpened by adoration, draw the bow with a heart wholly devoted to the contemplation of That, and O fair son, penetrate into that as thy target, even into the Immutable.”

M. V. SEETARAMAN

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

(Continued)

THE NEW EDUCATION FELLOWSHIP*

THE New Schools of the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth can be said to mark the beginning of the New Education movements in the West. All over the Western world, there arose a number of educational institutions with a wider outlook, a revolutionary spirit, and new methods of teaching and organisation. Each of these institutions chose its own way, which was by no means on all fours with the ways and methods of others, but what bound them together was the perception and feeling that the school must be for the child, and not the child for the school; that a great freedom must be given to each individual child to follow its own nature, its specific bent and aptitude, and order its own educational life; that the innate nature of the child must determine the nature of the education it must receive; and that the old-world relation between the teacher and the student must be completely reversed in order that a free relation of mutual affection and respect and a sense of co-operation might develop in its place. Many of these pioneer institutions were more or less influenced by Rousseau and his disciples, but they also struck out into new paths of teaching and organisation. Almost all of them laid particular stress on the individuality of the child, and its unfettered development. A scientific approach to individual education was initiated by some doctor-educators like Dr. Montessori in Italy, Dr. Decroly in Belgium, Dr. Claparede in Switzerland etc.

* I am indebted to the Year Book of Education, 1957, for much of the historical data incorporated in this article.

As I have already said, the New Education movement received its first greatest stimulus from the first world war. But, unfortunately, along with the stimulus, it received also a disfiguring twist. The respect for the individuality of the child, which had been the well-spring of its theories, was overshadowed by a feverish insistence on "national recovery and advancement", and "the promotion of a peace-making understanding of international relations." The core had, alas, to be sacrificed for the safety of the crust. The great promise of the start was buried under a clutter of superficial and momentary interests, and the hectic pursuits of national egoism. And because hot war or cold war has never ceased to harry mankind since, education has never had any chance to revert to its original principles. It will, in fact, never have, so long as it toes the line of power-blinded and unscrupulous politics.

In 1921, a number of educationists of different nationalities met in Calais, founded the New Fellowship, and drew up the following remarkable constitution :

"1) The essential aim of all education is *to prepare the child to see and realise in his own life the supremacy of Spirit.*¹ Whatever other view the educator may take, education should aim at maintaining and increasing spiritual energy in the child.

2) Education should respect the child's individuality. This individuality can be developed only by means of a discipline *which sets free the spiritual powers within him.*²

3) The studies and indeed the whole training for life should give free play to the child's innate interests—the interests which awaken spontaneously in him and find their expression in the various manual, intellectual, aesthetic, social and other activities.

4) Each age has its own special character. For this reason individual and collective disciplines need to be organised by the children themselves in collaboration with their teachers. These disciplines should make for a deeper sense of individual and social responsibility.

¹ & ² Italics are mine.

5) Selfish competition must disappear from education and be replaced by the co-operation which teaches the child to put himself at the service of the community.

6) Co-education—meaning instruction and education in common—does not mean the identical treatment of the two sexes, but a collaboration which allows each sex to exercise a salutary influence on the other.

7) The New Education fits the child to become not only a citizen capable of doing his duty to his neighbours, his nation, and humanity at large, but a human being conscious of his personal dignity.”

We cannot help expressing an unqualified admiration for this excellent constitution, which embodies the original ideals of the New Education Fellowship. One could not, indeed, expect a more idealistic constitution from an age of scientific materialism, in which to speak of Spirit (as the Constitution does) is to expose oneself to the charge of superstition, and to esteem spiritual values is to be considered a fogey or a throw-back. But what on earth did the framers of the constitution really mean by its first two articles ? No doubt, they sprang from inspiration, but were they at all understood by the framers themselves ? If they had been acted upon, modern education would have not only recovered the glory of Platonic idealism, but even enriched it by the modern spirit of scientific research and technological perfection, and raised it into a dynamic integrality of fulfilment of which Plato himself had scarcely any clear conception. But that was not to be. Science, unrestrained by any spiritual and moral principles, mastering man and not mastered by him, had to be allowed to drink the cup of its triumph to its bitter dregs. The social and material considerations outweighed the spiritual, and the first two articles of the constitution remained a dead letter, so far as the practical programmes of education, drawn up by the members of the New Fellowship, were concerned.

In another conference, held at Elsinore, eight years after

that of Calais, there were two thousand representatives from fifty nations, and Michael Sadler remarked about it that the Fellowship had become "the most vitalised body which exists in the world for the investigation of new methods of teaching and for the recording of experience gained in all lands in the fascinating and urgently needed task of *adapting education to new social ideals*."¹ The remark is interesting, inasmuch as it proves that the spiritual ideal, embodied in the first two articles of the original constitution, had already been thrown overboard, perhaps as being unpractical, and social ideals were accepted as the sole guiding principles in education. Good citizenship, instead of the flowering and perfection of the innate nature of the individual, came to be regarded as the crown of educational success. But this climb-down went unnoticed in the general distraction of the war-torn society.

In another conference of the Fellowship, held at Nice 1932, it was declared that the present crisis "calls for a concentration of all the efforts that are being made for an educational revival over the whole world." The school was sought to be used everywhere as an instrument of social betterment. The American delegates to the conference laid particular stress on the use of education as the means of "social reconstruction," which meant, in the then state of general unrest and flurried insecurity, vamping up education to repair the physical and psychological damages of the war. It meant, besides, something infinitely worse. It was, in fact, flinging the doors of education wide open to politics and the swarming socio-economic forces under its sway. The result was that politics promptly rushed in, and permeated the whole sphere of education. It could not be otherwise. Social reconstruction, under the urgent pressure of a desperate political situation, and without any sublimating ideal of social morality, can mean only one thing: it is letting social life be seized and distorted by exigent political and economic factors. And, so,

¹ The italics are mine.

naturally enough, the next change that took place in education, just after the second world war, was the introduction of the ideal of the democratic way of life. Now, democracy is an essentially political concept, and its penetration into education, whatever social bearings it may have had, could not fail to give a definite political twist to the educational ideal. Of course, this democratic ideal had been already established in American education; all that it did now was to cross the Atlantic and possess itself of the mind of Europe. Education for democracy, at its birth in America, was more or less, individualistic, thanks to the influence of Rousseau and Pestalozzi. Francis W. Parker, a Pestalozzian, proclaimed in 1891: "The spontaneous tendencies of the child are the records of unborn divinity; we are here, my fellow teachers, to understand these tendencies and continue them in all these directions, following nature." But the greatest credit for trying to reinforce the strain of individualism in American education goes to G. Stanley Hall. His aim was to make the school child-centred, and he contented that the curriculum of the school should be determined by the data of the child development. But the American way of life always tends to contravene the true individualistic strain, practicalism, socialisation and conformism being its characteristic traits. Much of what Hall had done was negated by John Dewey, whose "reformism" revived the conformist tendency, and rendered education community-centred, in which social or crowd psychology came to dominate and even direct the development of the individual. The individual was expected to conform to changing social patterns, and allow himself to be moulded by them. Society engulfed the individual.

It is true that the individual cannot, and should not, develop in insularity, and that the right balance has to be found between the individual and the community, in order to evolve a harmonious social order. But America has never been able to find this balance. As Fay Adams says in his 1938 Report of the Educational Policies Commission on the Purposes of Education in American Democracy: "...We must have a unitary personal-social concept of the child

which squares with reality, and which permeates and directs our educational thinking and planning.... It is the task of education to find the formula for uniting the individual and the society in a harmonious relationship." But this formula has never been discovered.

It must be borne in mind that the true development of the individual from the centre or core of his being can never result in insularity or self-centredness. The spiritually developing individual finds himself transcending his egoistic boundaries and embracing the whole world in his consciousness. He seeks his fulfilment not only in himself, but equally in others. The individual can be said to be perfectly evolved only when, liberated from his egoistic self, he identifies himself with the whole world. But to tear him up from his roots and graft him upon the social tree is to harm both the individual and the society. The Western mind, not being spiritual, that is to say, integral, in its approach to life or education, has missed the secret of the true relation between the individual and the community, and sacrificed the natural growth of the individual to the fickle demands of society. It has forgotten the historical fact that it is always the individual who is the pioneer of progress and perfection. Sacrifice of the individual is the sacrifice of the very lever of social or national progress.

It is, therefore, not at all surprising that social reconstruction, into the service of which education was so precipitately pressed, has been a signal failure. Western society, particularly American society, is in a worse plight today than ever before. Benighted and bewildered, restless and unhappy, it is running like mad after the elusive pleasures of life, almost lost to any redeeming sense of the higher values of existence. Immorality, crimes, delinquencies, neurosis, mental disorders are the order of the day. Education now finds it too hard for it to save the society for which it was made to deviate from its true path.

So, as we have seen, education for democracy was somewhat individualistic in the beginning in America, and then it became socialistic or community-centred, saddled with social obligations and responsibilities. Next, it became political and militaristic

or State-centred—a consummation which was implicit in the very first penetration of politics into education. This last phase is nowhere so prominent as in America, but it has already cast its ominous shadow over the whole of Europe, and even over parts of Asia. It is the greatest threat ever posed to education, for in the name of democracy, education is being hitched to the cog-wheels of the political and military policies of the State. Students are being openly called upon to take up those scientific and technological lines which will help nuclear research, the invention and improvement of armaments, or the manufacture of war materials. Education is no longer free—it is fettered, conditioned, and harnessed to political ends.

The Unesco, enlisting the active co-operation of the New Education Fellowship, has injected a considerable dose of its politics into it, and, as a consequence, we find the Fellowship, giving the go-bye to its cardinal concerns, and, to a certain extent, playing the physician to the casualties of modern civilisation, with the psychological nostrums of group-dynamics, attitude-change, mental therapy etc. No doubt, it retains a veneer of the old ideal, but the veneer has worn very thin, and the political and military exigencies of the moment, highlighted by the powers that be, are torturing the educational ideals to hideous shapes.

In the countries where education has not been geared to war preparations, it has been given over to State industrialism. Students are lured to industrial lines, irrespective of their individual bent and aptitude. The lure of money, position, power and honour override all other considerations. The spiritual, moral, and cultural ideals of education have been flung to the winds. The ideal of rearing a generation of youths who will shed glory upon their country and culture by their wisdom and character, nobility and dignity, courage and resourcefulness, and, above all, by attaining to the full stature of their manhood, seems to have been quietly shelved, so that the universities may turn out, to the satisfaction of the State, truck-loads of scientists, engineers, mechanics, and technicians. We find it convenient to forget the fact that culture

has declined and morality suffered a set-back in inverse ratio to the rise of science and industrial technology. Wars have become immensely more destructive, cruelty more rampant and coldly devastating, and peace and happiness have ceased to haunt even our dreams. It cannot be denied that a most cramped and debased education is responsible for this cultural impasse.

It is, indeed, distressing how, warped and perverted, education has been constrained to serve as a hand-maid to ideological indoctrination, and political, social and military propaganda;¹ how, instead of making for the freedom of the individual—freedom of thought and expression, and freedom to grow into harmony and happiness—it is made to fetter human thought, poison human feelings, and pervert human will, and yoke them to the service of mean and unworthy ends. Since the politicians rule every walk of modern life, and decide the fate of the peoples of the earth, this atrocious exploitation of education goes almost unchallenged. Blind perversity and aggressive egotism are left free to make havoc of the treasures of human culture, and drag humanity from crisis to crisis through a progressive attrition of its inner resources.

And still all is not yet lost. Education is not doomed to a total shipwreck. The darkness of extinction is not the destiny of man. There is hope, there is even a glimmer of certitude behind the present chaos. There is a seething discontent with the results of modern education. And history teaches us that discontent is the mother of deliverance. There is, moreover, a sincere, though spasmodic, searching of heart—not, of course, among the power-drunk politicians, who have grown callous—a germination of new ideas, and an unrelaxed enthusiasm for experiment and research, even in the teeth of an almost universal apathy or antipathy. Such ardour and earnestness, such resolute and persistent will, such unstinted expenditure of constructive energy, cannot surely go

¹ Russia and China are the most glaring examples of it.

in vain. The smoulder will soon become a flame. The soul of man shall turn anon to God's Light.

In the next article, we shall make a rapid survey of some of the most outstanding experiments, conducted in the West.

RISHABHCHAND

SRI AUROBINDO'S EIGHTY-SEVENTH BIRTHDAY*

WE are assembled today to celebrate the 87th Jayanti of the Seer of the New Age or the Prophet of the superman, Sri Aurobindo. This also happens to be the birthday celebration of New India, the Free India for which Sri Aurobindo fought and lived and achieved through the tapasya or Yoga. This coincidence of the two birthdays is a divine one and so was it considered by Sri Aurobindo himself as the sanction of God to his first dream necessary for the realisation of his second dream, the dream of supramental humanity. His passing away nine years ago has only accentuated the realisation of that dream. His spirit is moving and shaping the lives of innumerable individuals and it is not a little due to the loving service of the Mother who has been carrying on the Sri Aurobindonian burden and tradition illustriously.

During the past ninety years many mighty events have happened in India and the world. A very great age of science and economic and political history emerged and has reached peaks of achievement which no amount of criticism of materialism that has animated it can close its eyes to. The success of materialism is solid and even philosophy has become a handmaid of such shifts of the needs of the age. Side by side however mystic minds who saw the threat to spirituality in the areas of commerce and politics dominated by materialistic science and hedonistic goals, saw in this development an opportunity to transform these trends into vehicles of a higher consciousness that could wield power over the course of cosmic history. Their vision *sub specie æternitatis* saw the great possibility of historic materialism and scientism towards divine evolutionism which had been passing through the

* Address delivered at the 15th August 1959 celebration under the auspices of Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, Calcutta.

ages of natural, emergent and creative evolutionisms. Such then is the slow interweaving of the threads of materialism and mysticism, which we have been witnessing in the movements known to us as Theosophy, Christian Science, and Sri Aurobindo's divine evolutionism.

The old order has been severely and rudely shaken. The new order has been slowly defining its goals hesitantly and experimentally. Morals and ethical values are in the crucible. A new ethical theory is the need; and pragmatism does not provide except social and relativistic ideals. Small traditions built round 'closed' ethos or cultures are finding their dissolution.

This is an age that has also seen the collapse of empires and old regalia. This is an age that sought to erect new foundations for democracy that was by ancient thinkers dismissed as self-contradictory to human nature and utopian. The impossible ideal was sought for under the wings of science and evolution. A great thing indeed in an age when men of vision called for the birth of the Hero (Carlyle), the Obermann, Superman, and Messiah and Avatar, and who worshipped such men as Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini and other dictators who seemed to satisfy the craving for being worshipped and worshipping. As one critic¹ in the hey-day of Dictatorships in the period between 1930-1940 wrote, it is not so much the dictators tending to become scupperers and it is not so much an act of unfaith in the extraordinary man but the faith in the 'ordinary man' that makes democracy a tremendous force.

That our extraordinary men of this age have fully justified disbelief in them is a fact of capital importance. Mankind is sick of them. When the great thesis of superman was put forward as a biological desideratum or a spiritual fulfilment of man the world climate was all in its favour but the abortive manifestations of the same in the personalities of the political adventurers who behaved already as being 'beyond all good and evil' and 'above

¹ Y. Y. in *New Statesman and Nation* (July 1934.)

morals meant for men' had led to firm disillusionment. Supermen came under a cloud and there are no signs that it is passing. In the meanwhile the people or democracy of the people seeks to be stepping into the scupperers' shoes. Indeed we have been discovering a new phenomenon—that the word 'people' has hardly a reality, for behind all the camouflage there are intriguing men who seize power and hold it 'for the people'. Dictatorship continues in a new garb. It is the inevitable phenomenon of power that it should be tied up in the hands of one or a few and never the all. The eclipse of the superman today only shows that the types of supermen we got so far or who were thrown up have not been truly such. Sri Aurobindo when he criticised Nietzsche's Superman perhaps hardly visualised that he would have experimental verification of his criticisms. There is all the difference between god-consciousness and asura-consciousness. Mankind has chosen not to have the latter. Does it need the other ? If not, can it ever realise the truly significant choice of democracy as the self-rule of the ordinary man ? Man has been built from below. He carries within him what our evolutionists have discerned as strains of his materialistic, plantistic, animalistic past. Some have withered as not so very useful but some others have been persisting even vestigially. Maybe there is an inner secret in such persistency of tendencies and organs. He has been discerning farther shores of being, as and when he had arrived at a particular stage. He has been given the credit for being able to adapt himself. This capacity to adapt himself to his new surroundings though apparently biological and placed in the life-impulse is not all. There is a stage when man discerns that not all kinds of adaptation give meaning and value to life. Life itself discovers other values to be its need than mere persisting in a vegetative stupor or animal turpitude. It is this apprehension of higher than life which life discerns however unconsciously that leads to the widening of its horizons. Mind itself presages the same and seeks the supermind on *vijñāna* and the *ānanda* as its fulfilment. It is of course not to be expected that it has the full apprehension of what

they are but it has the glimpse that enchants and encourages it to move forward or upward to it. This becomes its goal or ideal. All ideals are indeed in the last resort forms or functions that go to satisfy, assuage, complete or fill up the individual and such are true ideals that can really satisfy and others are false or chimerical when they cannot justify their claims. Indeed man has at his stage discovered that certain values are just chimerical. Indeed at one stage in India and elsewhere the world with all its glamour for wealth, sex and desires and power, and lordship, indeed all the basic perfections of Godhead such as *aiśvarya*, *vīrya*, *tejas*, *śakti*, *bala* and *jñāna* have turned out to be chimerical. They are virtues for the divine not the human—alas. The theory of illusion of the world is a reactive metaphysics of disillusionment of the threefold aims of man—dharma, artha and kama. One virtue however was left with no content at all—namely, freedom itself from the snare of the world and its allurements.

However a modern reappraisal of the situation demanded a new and radical approach to the problems of human existence since all ancient and modern solutions have tended to fail after initial success. To this situation Sri Aurobindo brought a radical integral vision.

Sri Aurobindo nearly forty two years ago in his *Renaissance in India* spoke about the eternal and permanent features of Indian Culture and stated that though they are spirituality, prolific abundance of life and energy and strong intellectuality, yet it is the first that is the directing principle in all her adventures in the fields of science and arts, logic and intellectuality. Truly her spirituality is basically related to the search for the infinite freedom coupled with the harmony of the whole. They never could fall apart from one another. In a sense here is an organic unity and organic infinity which is the supreme characteristic of Indian spirituality. Whatever trends of secularism were there—they have always been and still continue to be, even in India of today and once again,—they are just partial views of reality or goals, chosen for pragmatic attainments. They always lapsed

into inanities and puerilities. However the fundamental integrality of the Indian spiritual consciousness even during the periods of *māyāvāda* and other worldliness, revealed itself through the abundant multifarious urge for the infinite in the 'finite'; the process of infinitising the finite has been one of the chief or dominant notes of great and eternal Art and nowhere has this been expressed than in Indian Art. Nor is it uniform multiplicity of manifestations. The very diversity of the manifestations of the Infinite in the finite many reveals that no real frontiers could be raised between the finite and the Infinite.

Already in those days Sri Aurobindo anticipated that the fascination of the Indian mind for western modes of thought and action and dress would pass away and throw up the resources of the Spiritual India to the front. It appeared for a while that that anticipation would be justified. Forces indeed there were at the time that promised the reversal of the trend of europeanising of India or occidentalising of the Orient. However now it appears it was an optimism that is unproved by events after the world war II and the clock has been put back because of the so-called need to meet a global perspective.

A more basic return to Spiritual India that is the mother of the Universal culture is the need. Sri Aurobindo's call for the restoration of *satya* and *ṛta* is indeed the call to dharma of the individual and the Divine in Yoga.

Today the problem of Indian crisis is being diagnosed more accurately, as not only comprising *svadeśi*, *svarājya* but also *svadharma* and *svātantrya*. These are basic concepts that have been most powerful in maintaining the unique tradition of India that realised wonderfully the harmony between cosmic *dharma* and individual dharma and value and worth that can only be realised in the context of his freedom. Sri Aurobindo saw most clearly that true spirituality depends on the significant metaphysical truth realised and practised by the ancient seers—the eternal manyness of the eternal One Being. The individual souls in a sense are the eternal many related to or inherent in

or basically inseparable from or organic to the One Reality known to Indian Upanishadic thought as Brahman. That the basic reality cannot be reduced to the mere abstract or absolute One nor could it be retained as a fulgurated many but only as many in one and one in many. This is the truth to which Sri Aurobindo had drawn our attention as inherent in the letter and spirit of the Vedanta.

Thus reconciliation of the many-one that Sri Aurobindo envisaged is unique and rescues his philosophy and *ipso facto* his sociology and political philosophy from becoming identified with the absolutism of either the idealistic or materialistic variety. His is an integral pluralism¹, as it may appropriately be called, as indeed it has been as well as integral monism.

This integral pluralism of Sri Aurobindo insists on the supreme value of each individual in the many and seeks his evolution to the status or poise of the Supreme Divine of whose many it is one. Indeed India has been striving in her spiritual aspiration for the emergence of the individual divine. This is the real content of freedom or *mokṣa* ; for in it is concealed the delight of existence that is the nature of the Divine *Saccidānanda*.

There is resolved the apparent contradiction of the four poises of our development as a nation and as individuals, by the basic acceptance of their reality and value, *satya* and *dharma*.

A new age has dawned with the crisis attending upon the individual. The only true value the individual has is his *svātantrya* or independence according to his inward and spiritual dharma. A crisis like the present was not unanticipated by the great pioneers of spirituality. Quietly they had prepared the people for the return to spirituality by their life and teaching. Man has to change himself radically ; his preoccupation with matter and hedonism should not degenerate into sense-found pursuits ; a return to the ideal of the spiritual man who does not

¹ Integral Pluralism means the real eternal many in the One. It has been stated similarly about Viśiṣṭādvaita that it is *viśiṣṭādvaita*.

refuse to recognize and transform lower values of the mental, vital and the physical material or, in the context of the society, the intellectual, emotional and material values (such as *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*) has been discerned as the radical call of the inward spirit of man. The inner man revolts against matter for matter as it is is the contradiction of his being. Yet the integral man is a necessity and he must either be born or made. The secret of transformation of the mental, vital and physical man (or the intellectual, emotional and mechanical man to use the language of the teachers of the Fourth Way) lies in the descent of a higher kind of force. This is the force that makes the human being rise to a level of awareness of the higher worlds of freedom open to man. Mere appeals to our ancient traditions is of no use. A new force has to be brought into play in the world and a force far higher than what mankind has yet known. Our recent mantras of 'Return to the Upanishads', 'Return to the Gita' or 'the Veda' or 'Shakti' or the more omnibus term 'Return to Religion' have left us almost with a sense of impotence though doubtless they have awakened man somewhat to his mighty past and may be a mightier future. However a new force is needed and it has to have the power to free man from his modern chains, the chains of pseudo-science and sense-bound methods of science and their ends.

However the spirit moves slowly conquering its territory by insinuating itself. The truth of the collective is now being annulled or corrected by the more basic truth of the individual. There is the call of the infinite and the eternal to the individual for something that should awaken and fulfil it. It is to this spiritual voice that Sri Aurobindo had listened and obeyed and he has given us the mantra of the New Man—the superman—one who rejoices in the freedom of all individuals rather than strives to annihilate and absorb them all into Himself. The spiritual evolution of man to the status of the godhead who is a perfect being in and through the cosmic and transcendent consciousness and acts by the logic of the Infinite is the inevitable step. He is,

if we adopt the ancient notions now revived, one who is characterised by *svārājya*, *svātantrya* and *svādharmya*.

Sri Aurobindo undoubtedly saw that great endeavours require true men of the highest spirituality, the yogins. He saw beyond India too and saw the grand possibility of India becoming the saviour of the world. India is to be the cradle of a new race of supermen, who manifest in themselves the oneness-manyness in a harmony of action or dynamic existence. They would lead humanity in fellowship all over the Earth. The dream of all religions—the Kingdom of God on Earth as it is in Heaven can only be truly realized when God-consciousness descends to transform all into its own nature, beyond the pleasure-principles and ego-principles that are dominating mankind.

Religions generally have failed, though individual men among them have not. It is the *sādhana* in and through individuals and their steady aspiration towards God consciousness or gnostic being that can rescue religions from being pompous institutions rather than real schools of spiritual training. The transformation of man cannot obviously be undertaken by the institutions of religions as they stand. It is therefore by a different technique that the divine consciousness is likely to descend to illuminate every heart and make it love the divine and detach itself from the lower values. Sri Aurobindo saw that nothing but the transformation of the earth consciousness can justify man's faith in the omnipotence of the Divine force. It is not the will to power nor the will to imagine nor even the apparent sacrifices that man makes that lead to the transformation of the earth consciousness either individually or collectively. It is one of the profound intuitions of Sri Aurobindo that saw clearly the ancient truth that the divine force alone can change or modify human consciousness and much more and that too in a shorter span of time. The unique and differentiating doctrine of Sri Aurobindo however is that though *avatārs* have been many and they have brought down great realisation yet the evolutionary possibility of man is not exhausted; it is to be completed by the incorporation at first of a

new kind of transmuted mind or the Supermind in the texture of the physico-psychic frame of man by means of Yoga. Such an incorporated mind divine shall have to become native to or 'emerge' in the future humanity. This phenomenon cannot be such as might make men think that it is not inheritable or transferable. On the other hand it can be inherited or transferred because of the changes that the Force is capable of moving in the very constitution of man which is governed by the three strands of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* undergo change and there such that not one of them remains as such. A fourth force transforms their ignorance into knowledge, their darkness into light, their changeableness into immutability.

Spiritual evolution and the birth of the superman is the only solution to our terrestrial maladies. It is in order to demonstrate its great possibilities and power that Sri Aurobindo dedicated himself to the bringing down of that divine supermind to integrate itself in the homo sapiens, not as a graft indeed but as an occult principle inherent in the yearning of man towards fulfilment and completion and freedom. The real truth of the individual yearning lies in this higher fulfilment. This fulfilment is its inevitable end or goal to which it has been moving through ignorance enjoying pain and pleasure, sorrow and frustration, disease and disaster. This goal however is not a prefigured plan already ready for being accomplished or already accomplished but a growth and evolution which proceeds diversely and not uniformly. The infinity of the Divine or rather the infinite manyness of the one Divine reveals the most varied and unpredictable possibilities for the very nature of the Supramental Reality or the Divine is that freedom which exhibits that the unique multiplicity of His oneness is also the harmony of the transcendent *līlā*. The transformation of man thus is inevitable : the very vastness of the undertaking in the world, rolled into one with such speed and precipitousness, has posed quite a challenge to the human mind. That the human mind has not hesitated to accept the challenge with its old and tested and tried instruments of its past and present manufacture in all fields of human life is a fact witnessed to by the innumerable

international organizations. However there is an element of dialectical frenzy, altogether irrational, seizing the minds, and one is not certain at all whether there can be a solution to these problems except that man has indeed himself to undergo transformation.

It is undoubtedly pessimistic to say that man has to commit *harakiri* for the sake of his transformation and this some serious thinkers do not wish to accept as a solution. But the human heart and man's emotive and idealistic being, notwithstanding all their optimism, are facing an enormous crisis in mutual relations and dealings, both collective and individual. State policies cannot annul or assuage the sorrows of the human breast. Educational regimentation, by whatever name called, can hardly touch the core of the problem. There is something radically wrong in such optimism. What is wanted is a total change in the human logic or mind, in the human goals and means.

Nowhere has this been more demonstrated than in the recent past. Civilization is on trial. A mind that can grasp the problems in their complexity and untie the knots that have been tied is the need. Further the human tinkering with Nature are bringing forth problems of greatest concern to mankind as a whole. A mind that works with division and separation, by analysis and opposition, can hardly cope up with it. Thus we come back to the solution divined by Sri Aurobindo—the need for the emergence of the divine mind in man.

Clear and definite indeed was this conclusion, and Sri Aurobindo's amazing intuition is incomparable in the sense of having anticipated that no other solution was possible, historically and ideologically; he saw that the sooner mankind seized this opportunity the better it was. A mere universal religion of humanity on either the socialistic or materialistic or any other form cannot lead man out of the critical danger.¹ He himself believed that this solution is an undiscovered fact for all the ancient seers seem to have

¹ In the words of Sri Aurobindo "While it is possible to construct a precarious and quite a mechanical unity by political and administrative means, the unity of the human

attained the truth-consciousness or bypassed it to the ultimate *Saccidānanda*, but that did not permit itself to possess and inhabit man as he is. The supermind did not come down to reside and modify the human species itself. The earlier *ṛṣi*-consciousness did not see this possibility. We shall not here discuss the exact nature of their consciousness but this much can be said that their consciousness did not admit of the transformation of the lower levels of matter, life and mind but a dissolution of them. It was transcendent to the terrestrial or the so-called phenomenal levels. Since it was seen that these dissolve at the touch of that consciousness they have been considered to be not only contradictory to the Ultimate Spirit but, in a quaint sense, phenomenal and illusory. The Jivanmukta of the past conception is firstly not fully free for he patiently bears with his last links of karma whilst being internally free or has the assurance of being free. He has burnt to ashes his terrestrial connections. Not so the Jivanmukta of Sri Aurobindonian conception. He is not detached from the earth consciousness but he is not attached to it either as it is. He seeks its transformation in all its levels material, vital and mental. The very qualities of prakṛiti such as sattva, rajas and tamas which act as reactive forces of Nature in the ignorance begin to function as powers of truth, consciousness and delight in the Knowledge. He is cosmically directed even whilst being the individual many of the One supreme. It is one who is born of the Divine—*brahmaja*—and knows himself to be such (*jñā*), and who in all his affairs and dealings is firmly devoted to that one supreme secret of integral unity in God with all else in creation and beyond—he knows himself to be the One Divine in the manyness of His Integral Being. Such is not merely the vision of man but his realisation.

The practical school for achieving yogic transformation was founded by Sri Aurobindo. The execution of this undertaking has been characterised by diligence and psychic power. His

race, even if achieved, can only be secured and can only be made real if the religion of humanity which is the highest active ideal of mankind, spiritualises itself and becomes the general inner law of human life”.

guidance of his disciples is characterised by faultless technique. His own verifications of ancient yogic practices of all levels coupled with his superb educational techniques suited to the genius of India and Spirituality is a landmark. The importance of 'fronting the psychic being' in education cannot be exaggerated—it is precisely this lack that has led to our modern educational institutions being merely what they are.

One more important aspect of psychic training or yogic training which has been not adequately realised even in interested quarters is the principle of spiritual transmission of the Highest energy or the transforming Spiritual force. No one who has not reached that level can possibly be the conduit of that force. If a lesser personality or one who has reached a level that is not the very highest tries to bring down that energy it will not come and even if it does it will not flow in a continuous way or flow in a tortuous way.

In Yoga of the conscious path it becomes imperative that the individual himself has to open himself to the descending grace of God which can be the transmissional force. But the grace must be called to the transmutive or transformative function. An integral transformation of man into supermanhood is the minimum prayer that is needed on the part of the individual. Once this is available and the Master chooses his disciple for the transformation, he opens up lines of inner ascent progressively opening up the planes of being from which he had descended so that there can be integration, conscious or superconscious, so as to arrive at that gnostic being who is one with all in the Divine and for the Divine or the Ultimate.

It is firstly therefore necessary that this divine transmissional force should work through the Master, secondly, that it should operate steadily and without weakening or lag in the individual removing all that obstructs the ascent. True, the Supreme can never be obstructed finally or definitively once He happens to take up the work of transformation. But it is this activity of that Divine transmutive force that grants the individual his faith in the Master and in his own destiny. Man's constant and continuous surrender

and prayer to the Divine Master goes a wonderfully long way to achieve this descending power and draw it into himself till it fills him fully—this is the experience of *ānanda* that is *ananta*.

Sri Aurobindo undoubtedly has created the very conditions for that great descent and transmission of the Spiritual Force divine. That it is already at work in the consciousness of men all the world over is becoming increasingly clear. Men are finding the need for a larger,—diviner—vision that embraces and ennobles all reality.

Sri Aurobindo has provided a definite philosophy for this evolution of man which would prove to be more satisfying than mere philosophies of the intellect. Rightly, he has shewn that an intellectual philosophy does not work. It is only a philosophy that embraces the whole man that can satisfy all and provide for his work in the world with intelligence and skill. The very applications of the psychic activity in a collective life will shew how the higher kinds of force act. The activity loses its sting of attachment and suffering.

Slow though the process of divine evolution is it is yet under way. It is also quite true to affirm that great spiritual personalities are at work on other levels and although Sri Aurobindo has passed away, the Work is going on because his living Presence has not failed and the work is the Ultimate Master's. The Power at work will produce powers and personalities commissioned to bring down the supramental and superconscious force without interruption for transforming man everywhere.

Can I predict that the centenary of the birth of Sri Aurobindo may well see the realisation of that Vision and Reality of a transformed society of divinised men? The Unity of the Human race cannot be achieved otherwise than when men find themselves in the Divine as inseparable many of that One. So may the Mantra of Sri Aurobindo taken from the Veda—*om namo devāya janmane*—ring in the Age of Supermen—divine men—who rejoice in universal truth, knowledge-power and delight for all.

K. C. VARADACHARI

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF SRI AUROBINDO

THE INTEGRAL PERSPECTIVE

IF Evolution is the fact, then the problem of man—the mental being—by necessity is the evolutionary progression to the supra-mental being, the Supermind. The nature and logic of Evolution consists in the emergence of Mind from Life in Matter towards the Supermind. It follows that that which evolves (ascends) progressively is involved and it rises to higher planes by the descent of the latter. The ascent-descent dynamics is characterised as the Integral Evolution. That there is a greater and vaster existence behind all that is observable and attained,—that is to the mind and its instruments, the life-force and its workings what they are to the material world. Matter does not know Mind, but Mind from Life in Matter seeks to know itself and by that seeks to know and use Matter for its own purposes. So Mind does not know that which is behind it, but that knows Mind. Therefore when Mind seeks to exceed itself, ascend to the higher plane that knows Mind and becomes that, then Mind will be known in its reality to that from which it derives its nature and function. How to realise the ascent-descent dynamics from Mind to Supermind is the problem of Integral Evolution.

The fundamental and unique feature of Integral Evolution is that it is comprehensive and progressive of multiplicity of phenomena into graded continuous unity and oneness. Evolution is possible by the necessity of Involution. The progression of Mind from Life in Matter shows that involution or descent of Consciousness-Force in Matter must be the starting-point of evolution. Emergence of the higher forms shows that the higher makes use of that from which it has emerged for its own purposes

that are particular and unique to it. Further each term of evolution distinguishes itself by preparing itself for the emergence of a higher term beyond itself. Each term takes up the previous terms or stages and transforms them into an order and organisation which are suitable and adjusted to its own operations. Transformation of the previous stages or terms necessitates the integration of them with the higher for the latter's own free activity. The progression of Mind from Life in Matter shows that Force in Matter becomes progressively conscious of itself. That occurs by necessity of involution or descent of Consciousness-Force in Matter. Consciousness-Force, then, is the dynamis of evolution from grade to a higher grade by transformation and integration of the lower with the higher.

What constitutes the evolutionary trend at each level is the movement of self-exceeding or self-transcendence to attain a principle of being beyond itself. Self-exceeding at each level is effected by transformation and integration of the lower with the higher by the descent of the latter. Man—the mental being in living matter—in his dealings with the physical nature, plant and animal life, and in all his dealings with himself and his kind manifests the tendency to self-exceeding; all his achievements so far are due to the realisation of the principle of self-transcendence, though in the final analysis partial and incomplete. Therefore the logic of Integral Evolution of Consciousness-Force is the self-exceeding of each term into the higher by transformation and integration. That is, Consciousness as Force manifests itself in various formations which are interdependent and interrelated and continuous in multiplicity. It is the evolutionary movement from uniformity to individuality and universality; from quantity to quality; from subservience and compulsion to harmony and freedom.

The truth of the workings of the lower terms though it forms the basis of the higher can only serve as an analogy to throw light on the workings of the higher, but never on its principles. For the physico-chemical, electronical and biological view of the mental being considered as the departmental activity of Matter is incon-

sistent with the levels of consciousness, from Inconscient to Superconscient, and their operation in interrelation. Materialistic mechanistic determinism completely fails to account for the levels of consciousness. If unity is the necessity of existence, then the various terms of evolution are but the different grades and forms of the one and the same energy, different organisations of one Consciousness-Force in existence. Evolution does not make sense if it is not spiritual evolution.

Why materialistic mechanistic determinism seems to be opposed to the spiritual inlook is because while the spiritual works from within outwards, materialism works from without inwards. Materialism seeks to reduce the higher to the lower and it seeks to explain the higher in terms of the lower. The machanistic approach seeks to reduce the inner to the result of the outer. It is false abstraction and a futile attempt, for it does not solve the problems of the mental being. The materialistic theory of form-evolution does not make explicit and answer the implications of progressive variation, complexity and continuity and unity of evolution. It is merely a statement of a process of formation and is limited to the physical and biological data of Nature. Therefore the problem of evolutionary progression is to be met not merely by considering the form-evolution, but decisively by seizing on the possibilities of inner evolution, i.e., the evolution of Conscious-Force.

Till the emergence of the mental being there has been variation in physical organisation from lower to the higher. But, further evolution at the mental level is to be effected by the reversal of the method. That will be the change of consciousness, self-exceeding into a higher level of consciousness, a principle of being—the supramental. Self-exceeding necessitates the full realisation and utilisation of all the powers and potentialities of mental being as the preparation for the emergence of a higher principle of being by descent. It follows that there should develop a perspective and method which renders the multiple complex variation of the mental being for the Integral Evolution of Consciousness-Force.

The consideration of various theories of Evolution shows that they fail to apprehend the truth of "oneness-manyness" of evolutionary progression. Integral Evolution of Sri Aurobindo is the self-unfolding of Consciousness-Force in the terms of evolution which are founded in and which inhere oneness in their multi-planal and multi-dimensional manyness. Whereas the several theories of evolution are merely partial and fragmentary attempts which throw light on one or the other aspect of the problem, Sri Aurobindo's approach offers the integral perspective and means for human endeavour.

Sri Aurobindo, the foremost representative of Indian tradition in the modern times, shows that spiritual evolution is the process and aim of life. The outer has meaning and value only in so far as it is expressive of the inner status. Therefore, the transference of the frame of reference and the principle of orientation from outward within takes the decision of spiritual evolution.

Freedom of self-finding, self-knowledge and development of uniqueness of the individual and harmony in human relations constitute the problem of man in society. That is the integral evolution of the individual in the group in the context of existence towards the supramental, the Supermind. The problem of the individual in the group at the mental level shows that the individual is a part of the collective, yet distinct and unique in himself. But he is neither fully aware of himself nor has direct knowledge of his fellow beings. That is the problem of the Many-in-the One. The Many are the diverse things of existence, the levels of Being from Inconscient to Superconscient and the factors of mental consciousness, and the individual differences in all aspects of both the individual and group life. The problem of the Many-in-the One is understood on the perception that freedom and harmony is the law of variation and oneness. At present man's knowledge is acquired by reason in its attempts at division, isolation and definition. Reason and its knowledge is a matter of tested inferences and they are arbitrary. Although the findings of reason have practical value and power, they do not give direct and integral

knowledge in response to the demand of evolution. Then integral self-knowledge is the need and goal of life. Integral Reality expresses itself in three terms : individual, universal and transcendent. To be wholly aware, the individual has to discover the universal to which he can relate himself. That is the process of universalisation of the individual. To be universally, the individual has to transcend his separative ego-existence on the perception and realisation of the truth : the Many-in-the One. That integral knowledge and living will be possible by self-exceeding and realisation of a higher principle of being, the supramental. This can be achieved by knowledge and possession of the universal consciousness in the individual and the collective. All attempts then should lead to the manifestation of potentialities and accomplishment of all complex possibilities of the collective towards the higher consciousness.

The problem of man in Integral Evolution has to be dealt with in three related ways : (1) integration of the mental being : the physical and the vital should have to be known and mastered in order that they become efficient instruments of the mental consciousness. Knowledge required for this can be acquired by reason, the instrument of the mental being. Reason by nature is analytic and its attempts are at constructed and synthetised whole, but not direct perception and possession of integral knowledge. Further, reason is liable to be influenced by the physical and the vital aspects (infrarational) and consequently lead to mistaken perception and wrong action. Therefore, firstly, reason has to be freed from the physical and the vital dominance and it can be done by self-exceeding towards the supramental. In the effort it becomes the efficient instrument of mental consciousness capable of ordering, harmonising and integrating the physical and the vital with the mental. Self-exceeding by reason will be effected by the ascent to the suprarational,—the supramental. (2) the individual in the group has to realise in knowledge and possess in power the law of universal consciousness. For the universal is the basis and the principle of being of the individual in the group; it inheres

in Conscious-Force of mutuality, harmony and unity that are the dimensions of the Many. Therefore the development of the individual towards the supramental must proceed through and by the universal. For, Integral Evolution is the movement of the One Universal Transcendent in the multiple complex variation of existence,—the One-in-the Many. The individual with his unique powers and potentialities has to strive for self-exceeding in the group by means of the universal. As the necessary consequence the transformation of consciousness occurs in the individual. The transformation of the individual initiates an identical movement in the group. Only very gradually it generalises and differentiates itself in the group. (3) the transformation of the group through and by the universal is impelled by the urge of Integral Evolution towards the supramental.

But what has resisted and blocked the integral development of the individual in the group is his egoistic separative existence. Although the separative existence makes for expression and fulfilment of the demands of multiple being, it does not make for transformation and exceeding. And the 'many', the group appears to be grounded in the separative existence of individuals. All the strife and conflict spring from man's egoism—individual and collective—and are caused by it. The multiple and diverse character of the individual in the collective constitutes the problem of integral evolution at the mental level. The modes of the universal, harmony, mutuality and unity are *not* universally illumined and fully realised. It is only through inner evolution that the individual can transcend his separative existence and universalise himself. Therefore the development of the individual is inner evolution having its centre within as against the standpoint of Western Psychology which attempts to deal with a person in terms of materialistic outer-environmental determinism. To transcend ego-involvements in knowledge and action is the goal of life. As in the individual, so in the society ego-involvements betray the lack of integral consciousness and they are the obstacles to mutuality and harmony. This problem becomes clear in terms of mental

conflict. Mental conflict in Integral evolution is the mechanism of inner development : conflict of levels, of individuals and groups. Western Psychology with its outer-environmental determinism deals with mental conflict in terms of adjustment and adaptation which, of course, does not solve any problem of personality, mental disorder and health, and harmonious living. Sri Aurobindo shows that in Integral Evolution it is the inner evolution that marks the turning point of mental conflict by ascent to a higher plane of consciousness. It is self-transcendence that resolves the conflict and transforms the opposition into harmony and integration with the higher. That is the problem of how to relate oneself to the universal. The fact of individual differences in all aspects shows that the knowledge of law of one's being can be secured only in relation to the universal.

For the integral development of the individual both his need of integrality and impulse of self-exceeding must be recognised to fix the right meaning of individual existence and aim and norm of his society. Only the law of One's being in relation to the universal law of the Many-in-the One can operate in the direction of Integral Evolution.

This law of life is founded in the two psychological truths, —firstly, the ego is not the Self, the Universal Being. It is not the egoistic satisfaction that is demanded but universality of all his powers of being. The will-to-be, will-to-power, will-to-know are not to be fulfilled in an egoistic manner, because it cannot be so satisfied, but always prone to lapse into self-ignorance and self-destruction. The psychological necessity is the transcendence of the individual ego into the Universal Being. Secondly, the individual has to live in harmony and unity with his fellowmen. Individual and society cannot live at the expense of each other, because it cannot be so satisfied; but leads to strife and disintegration. The law and purpose of life, then, is self-development through interchange and assimilation on the basis of harmony and freedom; that means the perception and realisation of the truth of the Many-in-the One. For it is the possibilities of the group that the

individual expresses even when he transcends its immediate level and his values are fulfilled in generalisation and differentiation in the group. Furthermore, in the light of the levels of being, and the power and limitations of reason, the frontal or formal self, or any aspect of it, must not be mistaken for the true real Self and that reason is but a necessary transitional term in Integral Evolution. It is therefore necessary to recognise the errors of standpoint and placement,—that the ego is an end in itself and all exists for its sake—in the context of the Many-in-the One. Then the individual ego will be recognised as not an end in itself, but a centre and formation of Consciousness-Force, a principle of selection and differentiation to work out the infinite values of the One-in-the Many. It follows that the individual development has to proceed according to the evolutionary status (*adhikara*) of the individual in the group.

Sri Aurobindo's discovery of the ascent-descent dynamics of the levels of being,—Inconscient, subconscious, subliminal (infra-conscious, circumconscient, conscient and superconscient)—is the decisive advance in Systematic Psychology. The discovery of the levels of being by Sri Aurobindo is of far-reaching consequences for the transformation of man through the Integral Yoga and its techniques in social interaction. Indian Psychology attains full maturity in Sri Aurobindo's discovery and integral approach. It shows the limitation of Western Psychology in its reductive conception of man in society to animalistic and egoistic existence. Freud's Ego-psychology is limited to the parts of total complex of life. Freud's system is confined to the levels of unconscious, subconscious and conscious in which the ego loses all its significance as the centre and the principle of selection and differentiation in evolution. In fact, Freud's findings offer the negative evidence to show the truth of inner evolution. Jung's system of Psychology comes near to Sri Aurobindo's approach in so far as it seeks to deal with the total complex of life,—the levels of being. But, the inner evolution in terms of the operation of the subliminal and the function of the ego in self-transcendence

towards the supramental is completely missed by Jung. For, his approach is limited to therapeutic situation when it is a problem of getting even with the cosmos as it is, not as it ought to be. It is the inner evolution through self-transcendence that brings about Psychicisation. Psychicisation is the change of the lower nature by bringing right vision into the mind, right impulse and feeling into the vital, right movement and habit into the physical, all turned towards the Divine. Psychicisation corrects mithyachara and buddhibheda which are the causes of mental disorders and diseases. That is to recognise the errors of standpoint and placement and transcend them in inner and outer life.

The individual is the key to evolutionary movement and therefore he is unique. Uniqueness consists in the differential organisation and operation of integration and self-exceeding of the levels. The individual svabhava is an integral being who expresses the 'manyness' of Consciousness-Force in evolution, combining within himself the levels of being and the factors of mental consciousness in interaction with environmental determinants of a given culture-pattern. But then the individual is an integral being who at the same time is a differential term through whom the evolutionary progression has to make further advance toward the supramental. Hence, the individual is an integral-differential term in evolution to the supramental. Swadharma, the integral law of development and action of the individual is determined by his svabhava to actualise and to realise the potentialities and the higher possibilities of the Many-in-the-One.

The various theories of Personality in Western Psychology relate to the fragmentary approaches to an reductive analysis of one or the other aspect or factor of complex variation. The oneness-manyness of the individual in the group in evolution is completely missed. Western Psychology set in the framework of organic form-evolution and environmental determinism at best can offer the ego-psychology of surface consciousness. This however, does not solve the problem of personality, mental health and harmony in human relations.

The individual svabhava has to follow the law of his being and action, swadharma,—*svabhāvanīyatam karma*. But the individual behaviour tends to be determined by the environment : geographical, social and cultural. The individual behaviour seems to be determined by a given socio-cultural pattern : family, caste or class, subculture and culture. The question is how far cultural determinism influences the svabhava of an individual, *nīyatam karma*. If whatever action that is done has to be turned in the direction of Integral Evolution according to one's svabhava, then it not only makes for individual development in self-finding and expression but the outer environment becomes the field of operation of the swadharma of the individual,—*muktasya karma*. Cultural determination, *nīyatam karma*, then, has to assess and accord to the individual svabhava his swadharma that is *svabhāva-nīyatam karma*, in order that being and action evolve in any given activity at any moment into a higher level of consciousness. That leads to the fulfilment of various demands of complex nature through self-transcendence towards the spiritual liberation, *muktasya karma*. Sri Aurobindo shows that the ideal Indian culture-pattern,—*puruṣārthas*, *adhikāra* and doctrine of karma, ashrama-system and varna-system—aims at spiritual evolution and works it out in terms of principles, processes and conditions at all levels of both the individual and social existence.

Western Psychology at best can offer an animalistic and ego-centric approach to social interaction and group life. Sri Aurobindo shows how the group life and social evolution is the correlate of individual evolution. The operations of infrarational, rational, suprarational show the several stages of social evolution in terms of transformation and integration through self-transcendence. The infrarational starting from the Inconscient expresses itself in conflict and strife and it seeks order and guided movement. The rational mediates between the infrarational and the suprarational in order to achieve transformation of the infrarational and tends towards the suprarational. There is the perception of the polarities of absolute and relative, infinite and

finite, and separative differences and oneness. The rational, a term in evolution can only reflect the polarities, but not relate them into oneness-manyness of integral existence. The rational brings the awareness of the need of integrality and impulse of self-transcendence and attempts in its own manner to solve the problem of the Many-in-the One, freedom and harmony. Reason does fulfil its function when it tends towards the suprarational. In Western Psychology, Reason is the mechanism of adaptation and efficiency, but never the mechanism of inner evolution. It is because the viewpoint is fixed at the level of interaction accepting that the animalistic egoistic conception of man in society is an end in itself. This is evidenced in the psychotherapy and personality development. Sri Aurobindo shows that the suprarational constitutes the ideals and values which represent the higher level of consciousness in evolution. The ultimate of life is the suprarational.

Social evolution is the correlate of the individual evolution. Sri Aurobindo shows how the symbolic, typical and conventional, individualist and subjective stages represent the progressive approach to the universalisation of the individual. The coming of the subjective stage is the psychological necessity of Integral evolution towards the supermind and gnostic community life. Then, the nature and function of the group in Integral evolution is to be (a) the field of self-determination and development of the individual, (b) an intermediary value between the individual and humanity and the godheads of the future, (c) a progressive approach to the universalisation of the individual, a work-out of a 'many' of the infinite values of the Spirit, the One-in-the Many. The problem of individual and social evolution is the effort to arrive at harmony of social interaction and human relations in diversity and variation and to grow in freedom of self-determination and self-knowledge. It follows that self-transcendence is the right of the individual, his aim and process.

The Psychological necessity is the recognition of integral evolution to the supramental as the need and goal of the human

being. It depends upon those individuals to whom this recognition comes and their effort and realisation. The movement of human effort towards the higher levels of consciousness, the supramental, will lead to the gnostic community life.

The integral perspective, therefore, shows that the integral evolution as the need and goal of the human being is the necessity of Social Psychology. Firstly, it is the corrective to the modern view which is fixed at the level of interaction and its dialectical approach to man in society as an end in itself. Secondly, it is an advance upon the materialistic determinism to the integral evolutionism that makes oneness-manyness of the individual in the group real. Integral Social Psychology, therefore, is Sri Aurobindo's contribution to modern thought.

Sri Aurobindo's Integral approach is the most satisfying to the modern mind, because, firstly it shows the necessity, character, purpose and limitation of everything in the total complex of Existence ; secondly, it shows the necessity of self-transcendence at every point and level that renders possible transformation and integration in evolution of thought and life.

M. V. SUBBANNACHAR

REVIEWS

Rig Vedada Amogha Sukti Ratnagalu by *N. S. Anantarangacharya*. Published by Jivan Karyalaya, Bangalore 4. Pp. 133. Price Rs. 1.50

It is gratifying to note the steadily growing influence exerted by Sri Aurobindo's Interpretation of the Hymns of the Veda on the enlightened scholarship of the day. There have been a number of publications on the Veda, during recent years, in various languages, and—whether acknowledged or unacknowledged—the approach of most of them reveals the moulding spirit of his researches into the Secret of the Veda. The present work of Sri Anantarangacharya in Kannada, containing a choice collection of a hundred Riks with explanatory comments, is the latest in the line and makes a most delightful presentation of ancient thought in terms of the new.

In a remarkably brief but adequate Introduction, the author points out that the Rishis of the Vedic Age were Mystics like the Priests of Egypt and Chaldea, the Magi of Persia and the Occultists of Greece. They were individuals who strove to know and probed into the mystery of life through measures of intensive self-discipline. The Knowledge so obtained by them was the Light which led the rest. These mystics delved into the secrets of external Nature but they also plumbed into the secrecies of their own soul and related their world-knowledge to the self-knowledge. But they took care to conceal this mass of knowledge from the laity for reasons of public safety apart from danger to the immature mind. They recorded their perceptions in inspired utterances—the Mantras—which were so skilfully worded that they meant different things to different persons. The author quotes Yaska to say that the Veda Mantras have a

threefold significance,—the *adhidaivata*, *adhiyajña* and the *adhyātma*—and that the last is the highest. Behind the apparent ritualistic meaning there is a secret sense without which the Mantra is lifeless : *yas tanna veda kim ricā kariṣyati*, he who knows not that, what shall he do with the Rik ? so asks Dirghatamas. (I.164.39)

To the Rishis of these Hymns, the Universe is not just something that has somehow come to be. It is an eternal object of wonder. It is a creation, an emanation from a mysterious Being, a Primal Person. It has been a deliberate creation shaped part by part from out of the limb and limb of the Manifesting Purusha who is all that yet hath been and all that is to be (Rv.X.90). The Universe is not merely generated but it is held together by the Might of the Lord :

By Him the heavens are strong and earth steadfast, by Him
light's realm and sky-vault are supported :

By Him the regions in mid-air were measured.

(Rv.X.121.5)

The entire life of the worlds is conducted and governed by Gods with various Names, Indra, Varuna, Surya etc. who are in truth so many functional aspects of the One Supreme. There is a Law from Above that governs all Creation. It is the Law of self-ordering Truth called the Rita by the Seers of the Veda and hymned :

Varied are the sustaining powers of Rita ;

Thought of Rita kills all sin ;

The fame-chant of Rita awaking to knowledge,
illuminating, opens the deaf ears of the living.

(Rv.IV.23.8)

Naturally, life with such a profound background has a great significance. It is an opportunity to live here fully with the body, mind and life—*sthiraīh angaiḥ tanubhiḥ* (I.89.8)—for a full life-

span of hundred autumns and at the same time to equip oneself to a blissful hereafter. Life here is a prelude to a super-life hereafter ; the one is as real as the other. Both the Here and the Otherwhere are likened to two horses that are yoked to a chariot and must march in harmony for a successful journey. 'May not our household gear lack the double harness' prays the seer. (Rv.VI.15.19). We may also cite here the utterance of another Rishi (though not quoted by the author) :

Indra, bhrātar ubhayatra te arthaḥ, both there and here thy goal is, Indra, Brother. (Rv.III.53.5)

Man is called upon to mould his life into the shape of the Truth, Satya, that is at the base of All, the Truth that is active in the movement of the Cosmos,—the Right, the Ritam. He is asked to cultivate and promote the growth of the powers and expressions of this Right—happy wingings of thought, dexterity in work and determinations of the will (Rv.X.25.1).

While exhorting man to ride upon the flood of life on its crests of Plenty, *vāja*, Hero-Strength, *vīra*, Felicity, *bhadram*, Delight, *madhu*, *soma*, the hymns warn him too against all that detracts from the high Ideals of Truth, Beauty and Harmony and dilutes the purer breath of the Spirit :

O Adityas, dispel all ill-will, all meanness,
all hostility from us. (Rv.VIII.56.21).

Drive ye diseases and strife away, drive ye away malignity :
Adityas, keep us ever far from sore distress.
(Rv.VIII.18.10)

He shall not tarry in lassitude, indolence and misuse of time :

Never may sleep or idle talk control us,
mā no nidrā īsatam uta jalpiḥ. (Rv.VIII.48.14)

On the other hand, he must be vigilant and prepare himself incessantly for a greater future. He should wake up in time :

Old age, like gathering cloud, impairs our being :
before that evil be, O Agni, give us understanding.
(Rv.I.71.10)

Otherwise, standing in the midst of Waters (of life) he will be left thirsty :

apām madhye tasthivānsam tṛṣṇā avidat (Rv.VII.89.4)

The Great Way of Immortality is of course in the keeping of the Gods. They alone can give the direction and lead on the Path :

The will and thoughts within my breast exert their power :
they yearn with love, and fly to all the regions round.
None other Comforter is found save only these : my longings
and my hopes are fixed upon the Gods. (Rv.X.64.2)

Great reliance is placed on the Grace of God to reach whom there is no way but that of love. Neither works nor sacrifices (rituals) can secure Him, *tam karmanā yajnaiḥ nakiḥ naśat* (Rv. VIII.70.3). The author quotes a number of remarkable utterances of these Seekers showing the depth of their devotion, the intimacy of their communion with the Gods and draws attention to the fact that here are the seeds of the movements of *bhakti* and *madhura bhāva* which swept across the land centuries later.

To the God-lover in the Veda, the Lord is dearer than his own life ; he would not part with Him for anything :

O Indra, I would not sell thee for a mighty price,
Not for a thousand, Thunderer ! nor ten thousand, nor a
a hundred, Lord of countless wealth ! (Rv. VIII.1.5)

As we have seen, the Rishis of the ancient times place a great emphasis on the progress and development of the individual—on both the material and the spiritual fronts of existence. But they do not forget that he does not live alone ; he is a member of the society. They remind him, time and again, that together all are born, together they live and together they advance. And this is their final Word to him, as indeed to the men of all times :

One and common be your aspiration, united your hearts,
common to you be your mind,—so that close companion-
ship may be yours. (Rv. X.191.4)

Such is the splendid legacy of the Seers of the Veda which the author of the present selections portrays in cameo for the benefit of a generation which is too much in a hurry to appraise for itself the intrinsic worth of this hymnal lore. He points out that the Rig Veda is not merely a collection of prayers. It is the original ore from which is drawn the Gold of the Upanishads ; in it are adumbrated the high Ideals of life and thought that later developed into the fundamentals of the Universal Religion of Hinduism. And, adds the author, at a time like the present when the path of salvation is all but lost to sight, when life in the world is in dire need of purification, when harmony between the individual and the community is broken, when noble ideals are forgotten and their practice long ceased to be, it is the Rig-Veda which superbly meets the want and shows the Way for the total upliftment of man.

M. P. PANDIT

Thus Have I Heard. By *B. P. Wadia*. Publishers : The Indian Institution of World Culture, Bangalore. Price Rs. 10/- only.

The book is a collection of the author's leading articles that appeared in "The Aryan Path". "Their prime object is faithfully

to repeat for the modern era the great truths of ancient wisdom, to awaken an intelligent appreciation of the hoary past so that an intelligent adaptation of some of the old truths to modern life and conditions may take place."

The essays present a compendium of the noblest thoughts, aspirations and preachings of the greatest sages, spiritual leaders, founders of the great religions, philosophers and men of practical wisdom garnered through a life spent in the quest of truth and light. The book comprises twelve sections under which a number of essays are included. The first section consists of essays on Sri Krishna's message, the second deals with Lord Buddha's Teachings, the third, with Zarathustra, the fourth with Christ and his Doctrines, the fifth with Ancient Philosophy, the sixth with Karma and Reincarnation and so on.

The author's humility and sincerity along with a wide openness to receive truth from all the fountain-lights of the world is a refreshing antidote to the modern materialistic tendencies. The style is clear and readable. Every page bears out Sri Aurobindo's remarks in the opening chapter of his *magnam opus*, *The Life Divine*, "The ancient dawns of human knowledge have left us their witness to this constant aspiration; today we see a humanity satiated but not satisfied by victorious analysis of the externalities of Nature preparing to return to its primeval longings. The earliest formula of Wisdom promises to be its last,—God, Light, Freedom, Immortality." Everywhere in the essays there is a deep reverence for the eternal truths revealed by ancient seers who laid most stress on the inner life of man, his subjective and spiritual being. The modern mind is trepidant and exercised over the atomic war that looms nearer and nearer in prospect but is stone blind to the potency of the subtle subjective forces whose effects though invisible are far more extensive and powerful than any missile. The author observes, "A man's thought, colliding with another man's thought, may cause a gale or a zephyr or a tranquil light and brightness of the air. A woman's anger or jealousy produces detrimental emotional reactions in more than one human being."

"All these instances," as the author says, "may sound exaggerated as expressed but a thoughtful examination of them will reveal a profound, a stupendous truth."

The underlying truth is the power of the occult psychological forces that push men about and use them as their unconscious instruments. We would go even one step further and say that a 'child's scream' and 'the howling of a mob' are not so much cause and effect as both are the effects of causes of occult conscious powers that are hidden from the physical senses. Mother, in reply to a query, whether catastrophes in Nature, are not the consequences of a discordant and sinful humanity, revealed this profound truth :

"Perhaps the truth is rather that it is one and the same movement of consciousness that expresses itself in a Nature ridden with calamities and catastrophes and in a disharmonious humanity : the two things are not cause and effect, but stand on the same level. Above them there is a consciousness which is seeking for manifestation and embodiment upon earth, and in its descent towards matter it meets everywhere the same resistance, in man and in physical Nature. All disorder and disharmony that we see upon earth is the result of this resistance." (*Words of the Mother* p. 59)

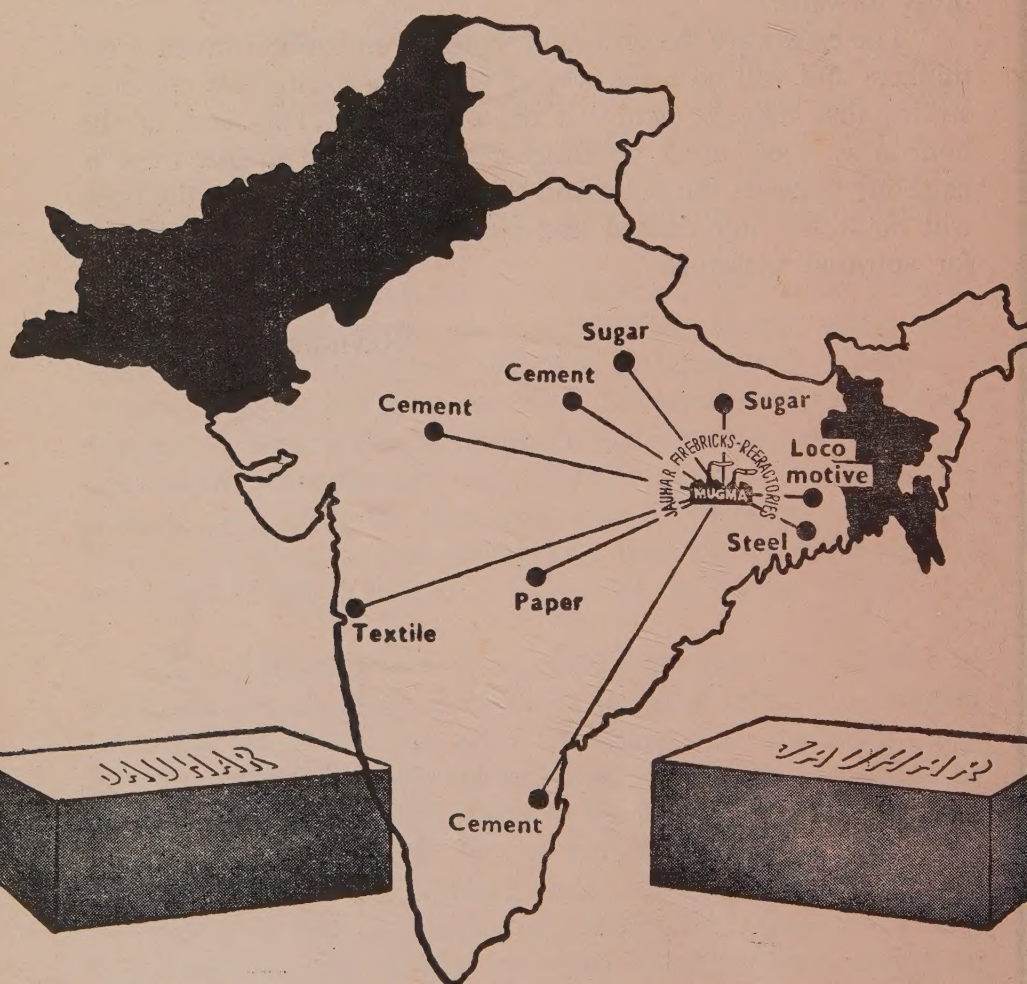
The author derives a living inspiration from the teaching of the Bhagavat Gita which alone by its gospel of spiritual dynamism can rescue the modern age which is obsessed with the dark springs of action hidden in man's subconscious nature. But the author in the wake of Gandhiji and others of his line of thought turns the great spiritual gospel into a mere ethical doctrine preaching the disinterested discharge of one's social and other duties. This in our view is a fatal misreading of modern ideas into a teaching that is through and through spiritual. The Gita gives always an important place to the moral life but it always points to a transcendence of these limited conceptions to an integral divine living. Nor can we lend countenance to the author's tendency to reduce the Gita into a laboured allegory. The Gita does not

expect of the individual to busy himself only with the inner war between the forces of good and evil, it accepts the battle in the outer life also if we see that human progress is immobilised by anti-divine powers and without clearing them humanity cannot press forward.

The essays are woven round thoughts and aphorisms of great thinkers and will go some way in counterbalancing the immense strides that man is taking in the outer field. The need of the hour is an equal inner uplifting of man's nature so that there is harmony between the outer and the inner life. We hope the book will be widely appreciated and read and will whet the appetite for spiritual literature.

RAVINDRA KHANNA

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